

Report of death and funeral of Charles Grover (March 1842 - February 1921)
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ROUSDON

DEATH OF Mr. C. GROVER

A familiar figure has been removed from the Rousdon Estate by the passing of Mr Charles Grover at his residence, the East Lodge, on Wednesday. Well known as a meteorologist deceased, whose death we regret to record, had for the last 39 years been in the service of the Peek family, as observer in charge of the Observatory on the estate.

The end came suddenly. About 6 o'clock on Wednesday morning while in bed, he appeared to be rather restless and his wife enquired of him as to whether he could sleep. He replied "I shall get up when it gets light" and thereupon, after breathing heavily for a few minutes, passed away. Dr. W. Langran (Axminster) was summoned and on arrival found that deceased was beyond human aid. The sad occurrence was reported by the police to Dr. E. R. Tweed (coroner for East Devon) who deemed an inquest unnecessary. The sympathy of a large circle of friends is extended to the bereaved family.

Deceased who was in his 79th year was of a cheery and amiable disposition. By members of the Peek family, with whom he had been associated so long, he was held in warm esteem. To visitors to the mansion he was invariably their friend and guide. At no time was he happier than when escorting visitors over the Observatory, where he had laboured for nearly 40 years, and explaining to them many interesting features of the instruments and of matters meteorological. For a lengthy period he contributed informative records to Pulman's Weekly News, the last of which appeared a fortnight ago.

Astronomy found in deceased a keen and persevering student and he was regarded as one of the greatest authorities in this country on variable stars. Shortly after he came to Rousdon he went on a world tour with the late Sir Cuthbert Peek, Bart, when he gained considerable knowledge appertaining to the science of the stars. To astronomical societies he supplied from time to time valuable records dealing with celestial bodies. Henceforth the Observatory at Rousdon will know him no more, but his work will remain as a lasting tribute to his genius.

THE FUNERAL took place on Saturday afternoon in the little churchyard at Rousdon. As the body was being borne away from East Lodge, the coffin being surmounted by some beautiful floral tributes, the peacefulness of the countryside, bathed in warm sunshine, was only broken by the tolling of the church bell. It was difficult to realise that Rousdon Mansion would not see him again, he who with his geniality and kindly greetings had so many friends.

At the church gate the mournful procession was met by the Rector (the Rev. R. Spurrell) who officiated, assisted by the Rev. J. R. Starforth (vicar of Axmouth). In the meantime Mendelssohn's "O rest in the Lord" was played by the organist. The little church was almost filled and amongst the large congregation were the Hon. Dowager Lady Peek (Widworthy Court), the Hon Mrs. Grenville Peek, Mr. and Mrs. Williams, Mr. C. H. A. Baker, Mr. Allen (Rousdon Mansion), Mr. and Mrs. A. Wiscombe (Mayor and Mayoress of Lyme Regis), Mr. and Mrs. H. Pearcey, Mr. J. Pady, Mr. and Mrs. H. E. Foxwell (Lyme Regis), Messrs E. Steward and H. Ellis (Lyme Regis), Mr. G. H. Gerry, Mr. and Mrs. Woods (Beer), Mr. Reg. Silver (Beer), Mr. and Mrs. C. Freeman, Mr. and Mrs. Collins, Mrs. and Miss Paul, Mrs. Critchard, Mr. Critchard jun, Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. J. Loveridge, Mr. S. Tatchell, Mrs. Spurrell, Miss Spurrell, Mr. Spurrell, Mr. and Mrs. Stafford, and Mrs. Giles.

The principal mourners were Mrs. Grover (daughter in law), and Mr. Grover (grandson). Acting as bearers by special request were the following employees on the Rousdon Estate: Messrs. Lewtell *, Flatman, Rowe, Tolman, Hellier and Critchard. The hymns sung in the church were "Peace, perfect peace" and "There is a land of pure delights" and at the graveside "O God our help in ages past". Wreathes were sent by Lady Peek and members of the family, all at Rousdon Gardens and the household staff at Rousdon Mansion.

Notes. From Nicky Campbell, November 2003

* Lewtell should be Lentell

The bearers-

Lentell. could be either William (a cabinet maker on the estate) but aged 71 in 1921 or Thomas, William's son born 1873

Flatman, Arthur, gamekeeper at Rousdon from c1914 ("my keeper" in Sir Wilfrid's will)

Rowe, Walter long time gardener at Rousdon. (he is the man with a wheelbarrow in front of the mansion in your photo)

Tolman probably either Emmanuel "Manny" b 1867 labourer at Rousdon or his brother Samuel b1865. Sexton of Combpyne in 1907

Hellier No christian name but his wife "who is the widow of an estate servant" was living at Avondale Cottage, Combpyne at the time of the sale in 1937

Critchard a) Alfred, a carter on the estate b 1874 or b) Alfred's son Arthur b 1902 (Roger Critchard's father)

Amongst the mourners-

Baker (Robert Henry Cecil) estate manager during the war years and friend of Sir Wilfrid (Left wine in his will), lived at the old rectory

Mr C.E.Allen, renting the mansion.

Mr and Mrs H. Percy, probably estate workers. There were 3 Percy children at Rousdon school in 1922

George H.Gerry, farmed Home Farm Rousdon.

The Smith's were the tenant farmers of Manor Farm Combpyne,

Mr and Mrs C. Freeman, the schoolmaster at Rousdon. She was the organist at Rousdon Church.

Collins, a large clan based at Rousdon/Pinney. George, Mary Anne Grover's father gardener, would have been a very old man if still alive. Any of George's 3 sons, or Joseph, a shepherd of Grindon b 1854 (? George's brother)

Mrs and Miss Paul. There was a housekeeper at the Mansion called Miss Paul (She had a nephew who looked like Sir Cuthbert. She was given a pension and lived the rest of her life at Charton).

Critchards, see above.

Mr and Mrs Smith either William and Helah who farmed Manor Farm Combpyne or their son Albert who married Daisy Pavey of Dowlands Farm

Mr and Mrs J Loveridge either John (blacksmith living at Combpyne) or his brother Joshua (also a blacksmith living across the road from his brother.They both worked for the estate.) Samuel Tatchell either father or son, local farmers.

Spurrell family Rev Richard wife, daughter Joyce, son William.

From 1881 census

Dwelling: The Village
 Census Place: Coombpyne, Devon, England
 Source: FHL Film 1341513 PRO Ref RG11 Piece 2127 Folio 91 Page 5
 Marr Age Sex Birthplace

William LENTELL M 31 M Coombe St Nicholas, Somerset, England
 Rel: Head
 Occ: Carpenter

Anna LENTELL M 31 F Coombpyne, Devon, England
 Rel: Wife

Thomas J.L. LENTELL 8 M Axminster, Devon, England
 Rel: Son
 Occ: Scholar

Alice A. LENTELL 5 F Axminster, Devon, England
 Rel: Daur
 Occ: Scholar
 Dwelling: The Village
 Census Place: Coombpyne, Devon, England
 Source: FHL Film 1341513 PRO Ref RG11 Piece 2127 Folio 91 Page 6
 Marr Age Sex Birthplace

Joshua LOVERIDGE M 29 M Coombpyne, Devon, England
 Rel: Head
 Occ: Smith (Jobbing & Shaving)

Elizabeth A. LOVERIDGE M 32 F Thorncombe, Dorset, England
 Rel: Wife

Julia A. LOVERIDGE 9 F Coombpyne, Devon, England
 Rel: Daur
 Occ: Scholar

Artha J.J. LOVERIDGE 7 M Coombpyne, Devon, England
 Rel: Son
 Occ: Scholar

Harriet M.C. LOVERIDGE 4 F Coombpyne, Devon, England
 Rel: Daur
 Occ: Scholar

Edith L. LOVERIDGE 2 F Coombpyne, Devon, England
 Rel: Daur